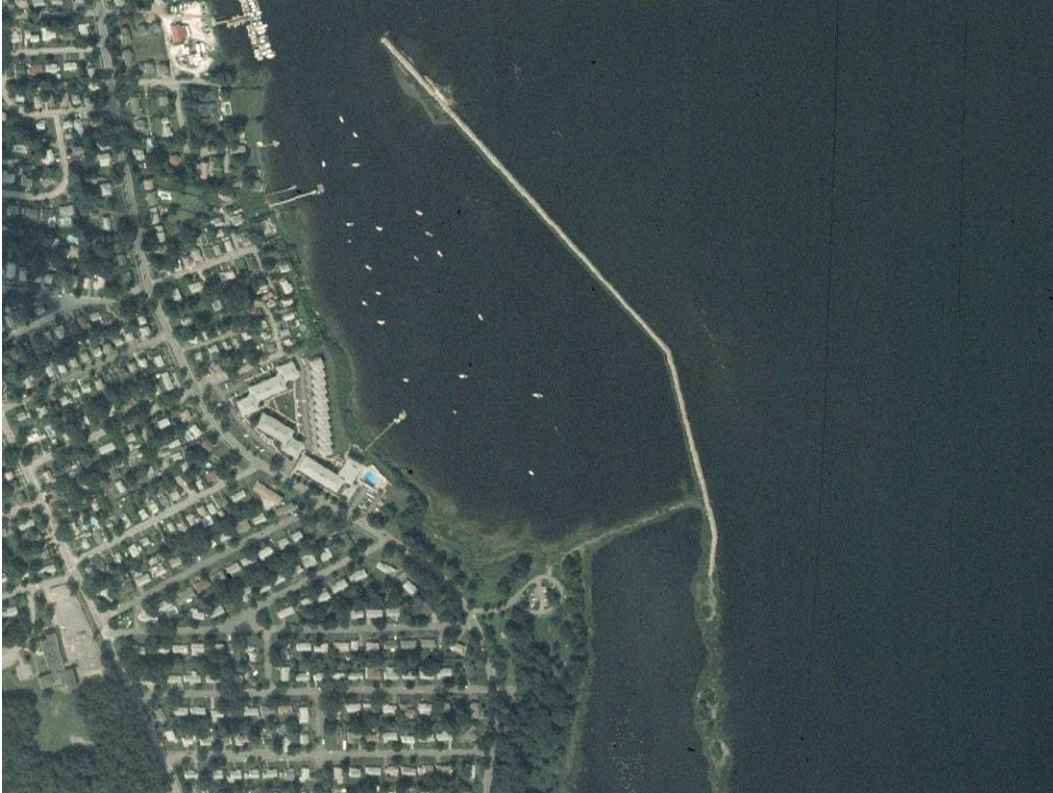


Site No. 20

SALTER GROVE

Warwick
Narragansett Parkway



SALTER GROVE

Site Description

Situated along the westerly shoreline of the lower Providence River, George B. Salter Memorial Grove is a public park leased and maintained by the City of Warwick on property owned by the State. This Upper Bay site is characterized by a long stone breakwater which runs parallel to the river channel and connects two small barrier islands. Constructed and maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, this breakwater is accessed from the park by a narrow causeway and is actively used for fishing along most of its length. In addition to providing fishing access, Salter Grove offers a launch for small boats and well-maintained landside park.

Location Assessment

Bay Location. Salter Grove is located on the westerly shoreline of the lower Providence River, along the Bullock Point Reach of the regulated navigation channel and across from Sabin Point (Site No. 3, East Providence) on the easterly shoreline. The dominant feature of this area is the long stone breakwater which serves as the primary fishing structure of the site (see aerial photo, Photos 5, 6). Connecting Marsh Island to the north with Rock Island to the south, this Army Corps structure provides protection for Pawtuxet Harbor north of the causeway (see nautical chart image). The Pawtuxet River empties into this harbor just north of the site, the upper portions of which are currently being dredged to remove sediments which have accumulated from the freshwater discharge to the Bay. Water uses in the vicinity of the breakwater consist primarily of small-craft boating and sailing associated with Pawtuxet Harbor, which includes a small gravel boat launch accessible from the Salter Grove parking lot. The well-marked main navigation channel is offset approximately 1,000 feet from the breakwater.



As reported through the Online Recreational Fishing Survey, common catch within the lower Providence River consists primarily of Striped Bass and Bluefish, both of which were indicated as present spring through fall. Waters in the vicinity of this site do not meet aquatic life support criteria and are permanently closed to shellfishing. Causes for water quality impairment include low oxygen concentration, excessive algal growth, nutrient enrichment, metals contamination, and the presence of viral and bacterial pathogens. These waters have been designated a water quality goal of SB(a) by the RIDEM and are likely impacted by pathogens from combined sewer overflows (see Appendix B).

Land Location. The George B. Salter Memorial Grove is a small local park situated along Narragansett Parkway in the Pawtuxet section of Warwick. Signed as a bicycle route, this roadway runs along the coastline of the Providence River north into the City of Cranston, providing many scenic views along its length. Land use in the vicinity of the park is almost exclusively residential (including the Narragansett Village apartment complex to the immediate north), though public use of the park does not appear to adversely impact the character of this

area. This stretch of Narragansett Parkway is also serviced by RIPTA buses providing public transit to and from Providence.

Approximately 10 acres in size, the landside portion of Salter Grove offers excellent aesthetics and is used mainly for passive recreation purposes. Paths running through the wooded portion of the park south of the parking lot are popular for dog walking.

Environmental Constraints and Permitting. Coastal features of the Salter Grove site consist of the rip rap breakwater and the fringe marsh which borders the causeway and interior sides of the breakwater (see Photos 4, 5, 6, 7). Providence River waters on the easterly side of the breakwater are designated by the CRMC as Type 4 (Multipurpose Waters). On the interior (westerly) side of the breakwater, waters within Pawtuxet Cove are classified as Type 3 (High-Intensity Boating), while waters to the south of the causeway are Type 2 (Low-Intensity Use). There are no known areas of eelgrass in the vicinity of the site.

Facilities Assessment

As previously noted, fishing at Salter Grove is conducted primarily along the north-south breakwater constructed between Marsh and Rock Islands. While providing ample frontage for casting to the Providence River, current use of the breakwater is hindered somewhat by the difficult footing and narrow width of the top flat surface; bypassing an angler to access a spot further along the breakwater is a precarious proposition, particularly if the surface is wet (Photo 5). Waters along its easterly side are relatively shallow (see nautical chart image), though anglers interviewed at the time of site visit were satisfied with the quality of fishing access afforded by the structure.

Access to the breakwater is provided by an earthen causeway extending east from the parking area (Photos 3, 4, 7), which itself is sometimes used for fishing along the coves to its north and south (Photo 8). Like the breakwater, this causeway is characterized by difficult, irregular footing. In general, the surface condition of both features hinders the usability of the site by elderly individuals and families with young children, and all but prohibits fishing use of the site by persons with disabilities. These features also do not appear to be regularly maintained, as the aesthetics of the site are marred by a moderate amount of litter along the causeway and among the rocks of the breakwater.

A small paved parking lot for the park provides space for approximately 16 vehicles (including 2 handicap-designated spots), though it does not appear that vehicles with boat trailers are capable of parking within the site (Photo 2). This lot likely reaches capacity during times of peak use of the park, and while there is no parking along this stretch of Narragansett Avenue, on-street parking may be possible along the residential streets east of the site. Landside facilities (including a playground, several picnic benches, and trash receptacles within the parking lot) are excellent and appear to be well-maintained.

Existing Site Conditions

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Existing Fishing Facilities		X		
Parking		X		
Compatibility with Surrounding Land / Water Uses			X	
Statewide Transportation Accessibility / Public Transit			X	
Site Aesthetics		X		
	Low	Medium	High	
Water Quality (see Appendix B)	X			

Priority for Capital Improvements: **Low**

Though originally constructed for the purpose of harbor protection, the breakwater at Salter Grove has evolved into a popular Upper Bay shoreline fishing structure. Due in part to the fact that it was not developed with fishing use in mind, this structure (as well as the causeway providing access thereto) is currently lacking in both safety and equitable access, and it does not appear that these deficiencies can be readily improved upon in a cost-effective and environmentally prudent manner. Public use of the site is also limited by the small parking area that currently serves Salter Grove, which could only be expanded at the expense of open park space. Also taking into consideration the relative poor quality of bay waters in this area, it is apparent that the shoreline fishing access needs of the State would be better served through capital investment at a more appropriate location or locations along Narragansett Bay.



Photo 1. Entrance to George B. Salter Memorial Grove looking south along Narragansett Parkway.



Photo 2. Salter Grove parking lot looking east.



Photo 3. Path to causeway looking east from parking lot. The boat launch is to the left of the path.



Photo 4. Looking east along causeway to breakwater.



Photo 5. Recreational fishing looking north along breakwater.



Photo 6. Looking south along breakwater to Rock Island.



Photo 7. Looking west along causeway from breakwater.



Photo 8. Recreational fishing within Pawtuxet Harbor (along north side of causeway).